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Conference Abstract

Training Taxonomists for the Digital World: Are we prepared?

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Abstract

Digital knowledge and skills are rapidly becoming integral part of the work of the modern taxonomist. Their importance is further increased with the recent recognition of DiSSCo (*Distributed System of Scientific Collections,* https://dissco.eu). This new pan-European research infrastructure envisions placing European natural science collections at the centre of data-intensive scientific excellence and innovation for taxonomic and environmental research, food security, health and the bioeconomy. The mission of this ambitious project is to mobilise, unify and deliver bio- and geo-diversity information at the scale, form and precision required by scientific communities as well as to transform a fragmented landscape into a coherent and responsive research infrastructure.

An important step in improving the capacity of the research community underpinning DiSSCo is the COST Action MOBILISE (*Mobilising Data, Policies and Experts in Scientific Collections*, https://www.mobilise-action.eu). One of major capacity-building objectives is to facilitate implementation of common standards and newly-developed techniques by training and education. Its achievement is envisaged by standardised training modules such as training courses, workshops, webinars, online tutorials and short-term visits to other research units.

The first impression from surveying interests of candidates to be included into training events, demonstrates an uneven distribution of digital knowledge and skills across

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countries, institutions and generations. We advocate that a massive coordinated training programme may result in more efficient establishment of common standards and, consequently, better implementation of the forthcoming joint efforts in the development of the new pan-European research infrastricture.

Keywords

Digital knowledge, digital skills, DiSSCo, MOBILISE, taxonomy, research, education, training, natural history collections, capacity building, young researchers

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